

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 11 and 12, and the title are amended. Claims 1 and 11 are amended to even more clearly distinguish over the applied references. Support for the feature added to claims 1 and 11, i.e., that image data of a plurality of images can be stored in the volatile memory, is described throughout the original application. See, for example, the description spanning pages 9 and 10, and pages 15 and 16. Claim 3 is amended to be consistent with amended claim 1, and claim 12 is amended so that the claim is internally consistent. Thus, no new matter is added by the above amendments.

The Office Action objected to the title. Applicant submits that the amended title overcomes the objection.

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 5-10, 13-16 and 18, and the identification of allowable subject matter in claims 12 and 17. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-4 and 11 are patentable as detailed below.

Claims 1-4 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,710,809 to Niikawa. It is believed that the inclusion of claim 18 in this rejection is a typographical error. In particular, the body of the rejection does not discuss claim 18, and both the Office Action summary (Form PTOL-326) and the body of the Office Action indicate that claim 18 has been allowed, the body of the Office Action providing reasons for allowance of claim 18. This rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to claims 1-4.

Independent claim 1 recites that the volatile memory has a capacity sufficient to temporarily maintain image data of a plurality of images to be transferred to an external memory. Niikawa does not disclose or suggest such a volatile memory. The DRAM image memory 209 of Niikawa, which the Office Action alleged corresponds to the claimed volatile memory, clearly has a capacity of a single frame (image data of a single image). See, for

example, column 8, lines 2-7 and column 10, lines 26-47 of Niikawa. Accordingly, Niikawa does not disclose all features of independent claim 1, and thus does not anticipate claims 1-4.

In addition, as the image memory 209 of Niikawa is used merely for temporarily storing an image before it is displayed or transferred to a more permanent memory (memory card 8), there is no suggestion in Niikawa to store image data of more than one image in image memory 209. Accordingly, the combination of features recited in independent claim 1 is not suggested by Niikawa.

Accordingly, independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-4 are patentable over Niikawa. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,018,017 to Sasaki et al. in view of Niikawa. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 11 recites a volatile memory that has a capacity sufficient to temporarily maintain image data of a plurality of images, similar to independent claim 1 discussed above. While Sasaki et al. discloses storing an image in buffer memory 31₆ when the more permanent memory card 15 is full, Sasaki et al. like Niikawa, does not disclose or suggest storing image data of more than one image in buffer memory 31₆. In particular, Sasaki et al. indicates that the capacity of the buffer memory 31₆ is set at least to a value enough to store the data of one frame. See column 10, lines 34-36. In addition, Sasaki et al. teaches that if the memory capacity of the memory card 15 is full, then only a single image will be stored in buffer memory 31₆, and thereafter any future image taking (i.e., photography) is inhibited until the memory card is replaced (or emptied) and the one frame of image data stored on the buffer memory 31₆ is transferred out of that buffer memory (i.e., into the now empty memory card 15 or simply erased). See, for example, column 10, lines 41-44 of Sasaki et al. ("when the number of available data blocks [in the memory card 15] is not sufficient, the image data is kept stored in buffer memory 31₆ and the next photographing

operation is inhibited until a new memory card is set."). Thus, neither Sasaki et al. nor Niikawa discloses the volatile memory recited in independent claim 11.

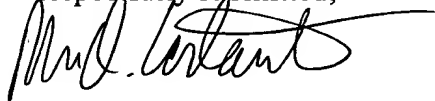
In addition, it would not have been obvious to modify the system of Sasaki et al. in view of Niikawa. As described, for example, in column 17, lines 11-16 of Niikawa, when the power supply capacity of the battery becomes low, Niikawa teaches taking measures in order to conserve power. One of those measures is to prohibit use of image memory 209. It would not have been obvious to modify Sasaki et al. in view of Niikawa, because Sasaki et al. teaches that power should be supplied to buffer memory 31₆ in order to maintain the image data of the one image stored therein. See, for example, column 10, lines 44-50. Accordingly, it would not have been obvious to apply the teachings of Niikawa to the camera of Sasaki et al.

For at least these reasons, the combination of features recited in independent claim 11 is not disclosed or suggested by Sasaki et al. and Niikawa. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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MAC/ccs

Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: March 7, 2005

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